

Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 INR-07

NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 AID-05 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05

SS-15 STR-01 CEA-01 L-02 H-01 PRS-01 PA-01 EUR-12

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SUBJ: PRESIDENT VELASCO'S PRESS COMMENTS ON MARCONA AND
BRANIFF

1. DURING MARATHON JAN 29 PRESS CONFERENCE, PRESIDENT VELASCO WAS ASKED ABOUT MARCONA AND BRANIFF. VELASCO'S REPLIES AS THEY APPEAR IN THE OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT AS WELL AS THE ACTUAL TAPED REMARKS ARE REPORTED HEREIN.

2. MARCONA. JOURNALIST ASKED VELASCO, "WHEN WILL MARCONA BE NATIONALIZED?" VELASCO REPLIED, "AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED, TOMORROW. BUT NATIONALIZATION IS ALREADY A FACT. EVERYBODY KNOWS IT. MARCONA WILL SOON BE PERUVIAN." NEWSMAN ADDED, "HAVE THE NEGOTIATIONS BEGUN?" VELASCO SAID, "THERE ARE CONVERSATIONS. IN SUM, WE WILL SOON DO IT (I.E., NATIONALIZE)." (IN TAPE, VELASCO SAYS THAT MARCONA WILL BE PERUVIAN, IN ONE WAY ("A LA BUENA") OR ANOTHER ("A LA MALA").

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3. BRANIFF. PRESIDENT WAS ASKED ABOUT BRANIFF'S "THREATS"

TO SUSPEND AIRLINE SERVICE. TAPE REVEALS THAT VELASCO SAID PERU DEFENDS ITS SKIES, JUST AS IT DEFENDS ITS LAND AND SEA (200 MILES). "WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO IMPOSE CONDITIONS ON AIR TRAFFIC JUST AS OTHER COUNTRIES DO...BUT NOW THOSE GENTLEMEN (BRANIFF) DO NOT WANT A GOOD UNDERSTANDING WITH AEROPERU'S OFFICIALS. AEROPERU ONLY WANTS JUSTICE AND EQUALITYTHEY WANT TO IMPOSE CONDITIONS AS IN THE OLD DAYS....PERU CHANGED ON OCTOBER 3 (1968)....PERU IS FRIENDS WITH THE BIG AND SMALL COUNTRIES, BUT IT CAN BE ANYONE'S ENEMY. WE DO NOT CARE. WE ARE FREE AND INDEPENDENT....IF BRANIFF SUCCEEDS IN HAVING THE U.S. BLOCK THE ENTRY OF AN AEROPERU PLANE TO MIAMI, WE WILL NATURALLY - IN THE AIR- TURN BACK ANY PLANE FROM ANY AIRLINE, NOT ONLY BRANIFF BUT ANY U.S. AIRLINE, WHICH IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT. PERU IS NOW PERU. IT IS A PLEASURE TO SAY PERU OVERSEAS...."

4. COMMENT: MILDER PUBLISHED OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT SAYS THAT PERU WILL NOT HESITATE TO "SUSPEND THE FLIGHTS OF ALL AMERICAN AIRCRAFT OVER PERU, NOT ONLY BRANIFF'S."

5. DESPITE THE OFFENSIVENESS OF THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS, WE BELIEVE THEY WERE, TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT AT LEAST, INTENDED FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION AND SHOULD PROBABLY NOT BE TAKEN WHOLELY AT FACE VALUE. IN THE CASE OF MARCONA, VELASCO WAS ECHOING MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINES FERNANDEZ MALDONADO'S REMARKS MADE EARLIER THIS MONTH. MARCONA STILL CONFIDENTLY EXPECTS TO NEGOTIATE A MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS ARRANGEMENT WITH THE GOP, AND SENIOR MARCONA OFFICIALS WHO VISITED LIMA TEN DAYS AGO REPORTEDLY RETURNED TO U.S. VERY ENCOURAGED BY RECEPTIVE ATTITUDE THEY ENCOUNTERED HERE. IN THE CASE OF BRANIFF, VELASCO WAS ECHOING AIR MINISTER GILARDI (LIMA 0635 AND 0643) AND HIS REMARKS PROBABLY DO NOT AFFECT IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER WHATEVER POSSIBILITIES MAY EXIST FOR RESOLVING U.S./PERUVIAN CIVIL AIR DIFFERENCES.
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